

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the Summary of Invention section on page 2, line 16 through page 9, line 9 with the following amended section:

--According to one aspect of the present invention, an image reading apparatus includes selection means for selecting and connecting one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses, first determination means for determining whether or not input of management information relating to a user is to be requested of the user based on information received from the selected image forming apparatus, input means for inputting the management information and transmitting the input management information to the selected image forming apparatus by the user in accordance with a determination of the first determination means, second determination means for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information, and image reading means for reading an image of an original based on a determination of the second determination means, and for transmitting an image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus.

According to another aspect of the present invention, an image forming apparatus includes request means for transmitting a request for input of management information relating to a user of an image reading apparatus to the image reading apparatus when the image forming apparatus is selected by the image reading apparatus, determination means for determining permission/prohibition of image reading based on the management

information transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the request for input and for transmitting information relating to the permission/prohibition to the image reading apparatus, and image processing means for receiving and processing an image signal transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the information relating to the permission/prohibition.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, an image reading method includes a selection procedure for selecting and connecting one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses, a first determination procedure for determining whether or not input of management information relating to a user is to be requested of the user based on information received from the selected image forming apparatus, an input procedure for inputting the management information and transmitting the input management information to the selected image forming apparatus by the user in accordance with the determination of the first determination means, a second determination procedure for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information, and an image reading procedure for reading the image of the original based on a determination in the second determination procedure, and for transmitting an image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, an image forming method includes a request procedure for transmitting a request for input of management information relating to a user of an image reading apparatus to the image reading apparatus when an image forming apparatus is selected by the image reading apparatus, a determination

procedure for determining permission/prohibition of image reading based on the management information transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the request for input, and for transmitting information relating to the permission/prohibition to the image reading apparatus, and an image processing procedure for receiving and processing an image signal transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the information relating to the permission/prohibition.

According to yet a further aspect of the present invention, an image communication system includes an image reading apparatus including selection means for selecting and connecting one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses, first determination means for determining whether or not input of management information relating to a user is to be requested to the user in accordance with a request for input received from the selected image forming apparatus, input means for inputting the management information and transmitting the input management information to the selected image forming apparatus by the user in accordance with the determination of the first determination means, second determination means for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information, and image reading means for reading the image of the original based on a determination of the second determination means, and for transmitting an image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus, and an image forming apparatus including request means for transmitting a request for input of the management information when the image forming apparatus is selected by the image reading apparatus, third determination means for determining

permission/prohibition of image reading based on the management information transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the request for input and for transmitting information relating to the permission/prohibition to the image reading apparatus, image processing means for receiving and processing an image signal transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the information relating to the permission/prohibition, and communication means for performing communication of information between the image reading apparatus and the image forming apparatus.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a communication method includes the step of executing, in an image reading apparatus, a selection procedure for selecting and connecting one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses, a first determination procedure for determining whether or not input of management information relating to a user is to be requested to the user in accordance with a request for input received from the selected image forming apparatus, an input procedure for inputting the management information and transmitting the input management information to the selected image forming apparatus by the user in accordance with a determination in the first determination procedure, a second determination procedure for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information, and an image reading procedure for reading the image of the original based on a determination in the second determination procedure, and for transmitting an image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus, and executing in the selected image forming apparatus, a request procedure for transmitting a request for input of

the management information relating to the image reading apparatus, a third determination procedure for determining permission/prohibition of image reading based on the management information transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the request for input, and for transmitting the information relating to the permission/prohibition to the image reading apparatus, and an image processing procedure for receiving and processing an image signal transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the information relating to the permission/prohibition.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a computer readable memory stores a program for implementing selection processing for selecting and connecting one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses, first determination processing for determining whether or not input of management information relating to a user is to be requested to the user based on information received from a selected image forming apparatus, input processing for inputting the management information and transmitting the input management information to the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with a determination in the first determination processing, second determination processing for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information, and image reading processing for reading the image of the original based on a determination in the second determination processing, and for transmitting an image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a computer

readable memory stores a program for implementing request processing for transmitting a request for input of management information relating to a user of an image reading apparatus to the image reading apparatus when an image forming apparatus is selected by the image reading apparatus, determination processing for determining permission/prohibition of image reading based on the management information transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the request for input, and for transmitting information relating to the permission/prohibition to the image reading apparatus, and image processing for receiving and processing an image signal transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the information relating to the permission/prohibition:

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a computer readable memory stores a program for implementing selection processing for selecting and connecting one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses, first determination processing for determining whether or not input of management information relating to a user is to be requested to the user in accordance with a request for input received from the selected image forming apparatus, input processing for inputting the management information and transmitting the input control information to the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with a determination in the first determination processing, second determination processing for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information, and image reading processing for reading the image of the original based on a determination in the second determination processing, and for transmitting an image signal representing the read image to the selected

image forming apparatus, request processing for transmitting a request for input of the management information to the image reading apparatus when the image forming apparatus is selected by the image reading apparatus, third determination processing for determining permission/prohibition of image reading based on the management information transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the request for input, and for transmitting the information relating to the permission/prohibition to the image reading apparatus, and image processing for receiving and processing an image signal transmitted from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the information relating to the permission/prohibition.

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According to still another aspect of the present invention, an authentication system includes a first terminal apparatus capable of executing a plurality of functions, and a second terminal apparatus for assigning and requesting execution of one of the plurality of functions. Different authentication functions are set for each of the plurality of respective functions of the first terminal apparatus.

According to one aspect of the invention, an image reading apparatus, connected to a plurality of image forming apparatuses via a network, includes: (1) generation means for generating an image signal on the basis of reading the image; (2) selection means for selecting one from the plurality of image forming apparatuses for receipt of the generated image signal; (3) input instruction reception means for receiving an input instruction of user management information from the selected image forming apparatus; (4) determination means for determining whether or not the input of the user management information is necessary, in accordance with the received input instruction; (5) input control

means for controlling the input of the user management information so as to be inputted in accordance with the result of the determination by the determination means; (6) output means for outputting the inputted user management information to the selected image forming apparatus; (7) reception means for receiving, from the selected image forming apparatus, availability information for using the selected image forming apparatus based on the output of the user management information; and (8) transmission control means for controlling transmission such that the generated image signal is transmitted to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the availability information.

According to another aspect of the present invention, an image reading method for controlling an image reading apparatus, connected to a plurality of image forming apparatuses via a network, includes the steps of: (1) generating an image signal on the basis of reading the image; (2) selecting one from the plurality of image forming apparatuses for receipt of the generated image signal; (3) receiving an input instruction of user management information from the selected image forming apparatus; (4) determining whether or not the input of the user management information is necessary, in accordance with the received input instruction; (5) controlling the input of the user management information so as to be inputted in accordance with the result of the determination in the determining step; (6) outputting the inputted user management information to the selected image forming apparatus; (7) receiving from the selected image forming apparatus, availability information for using the selected image forming apparatus based on the output of the user management information; and (8) controlling transmission such that the generated image signal is transmitted to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the availability information.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a computer readable memory storing a program executing an image reading method for controlling an image reading apparatus, connected to a plurality of image forming apparatuses via a network, the program including: (1) code for generating an image signal on the basis of reading the image; (2) code for selecting one from the plurality of image forming apparatuses for receipt of the generated image signal; (3) code for receiving an input instruction of user management information from the selected image forming apparatus; (4) code for determining whether or not the input of the user management information is necessary, in accordance with the received input instruction; (5) code for controlling the input of the user management information so as to be inputted in accordance with the result of the determination by the determination code; (6) code for outputting the inputted user management information to the selected image forming apparatus; (7) code for receiving from the selected image apparatus, availability information for using the selected image forming apparatus based on the output of the user management information; and (8) code for controlling transmission such that the generated image signal is transmitted to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the availability information.

The foregoing and other objects, advantages and features of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.--